

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are in response to the Office Action dated December 4, 2006. Claims 1-47 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-47 have been rejected. Claims 1-47 remain pending. For the reasons set forth more fully below, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are allowable. Consequently, reconsideration, allowance, and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has stated:

Claims 1-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guaraldi et al. (US 6,122,978).

Regarding claims 1, 10, 20, 32-34, 40-42, 46 and 47 Guaraldi teaches an apparatus and method comprising a frame (100), at least one cantilevered roller shaft (113) comprises a distal end and a proximal end for advancing a document (104), wherein the proximal end is coupled to the frame of such that the distal end floats (As shown in Figure 3 and Column 6, Lines 14-36) and the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is supported only at one end (Figure 3) and a bearing (116). However, he does not explicitly disclose a spring coupled to the frame and the bearing. Guaraldi et al. does at least teach a flexible coupling member (124) that can function as a spring.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention as taught by Guaraldi to include the flexible coupling member as a spring for the purpose of compensating for the axial misalignment/displacement of the print cylinders...

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejections. The present invention provides a document feeder device. The document feeder device includes a frame and at least one cantilevered roller shaft for advancing a document, where an unsupported end of the at least one cantilevered roller shaft floats, a bearing coupled to the at least one cantilevered roller shaft, and a spring coupled to the frame and the bearing. The document feeder device eliminates the need for a rigid frame to support the unsupported end. This decreases the cost of production by

eliminating the need for additional frame hardware **and/or** more rigid frame hardware. (Abstract.)

Callendrier in view of Matsuda does not teach or suggest these features, as discussed below.

Guaraldi discloses a printing unit with axially removable printing sleeves. The printing unit includes a rotatable print cylinder and a rotatable blanket cylinder. A tubular printing blanket is removably mounted on the blanket cylinder. The printing unit may have an imaging unit mounted therein. A printing member, which is mountable on the print cylinder, is imaged by the imaging unit inside the printing unit. The printing member has a continuous surface and may be removed axially from the print cylinder. The printing unit may be configured as a cantilever printing unit, or, alternatively, may be configured with both a gear side frame and a work side frame for supporting the print and blanket cylinders. In order to provide a variable-cutoff capability, a plurality of print cylinder saddles may be provided. Each print cylinder saddle has the same inner diameter for mounting on the print cylinders. However, in order to provide a variable cut-off, the print cylinder saddles may have a variety of outer diameters. (Abstract.)

Applicants agree with the Examiner that Guaraldi does not disclose a spring coupled to the frame and the bearing. The Examiner has referred to a flexible coupling member of Guaraldi and has asserted that the coupling member can function as a spring. However, nowhere does Guaraldi teach or suggest that the coupling member can function as a spring. In fact, Guaraldi mentions that the “flexible couplings could be formed from a flexible disc coupling, or a flexible gear coupling” (column 7, lines 34-37). This clearly teaches away from the coupling members functioning as springs. Furthermore, referring to Figure 6a of Guaraldi, none of the couplings 123, 124, 125 and 126 make any contact with the frame 116. In contrast to Guaraldi, spring of the present invention couples to the “frame **and** the bearing.”

Therefore, Guaraldi does not teach or suggest the present invention as recited in independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40, and these claims are allowable over Guaraldi.

Dependent claims 2-9, 11-19, 21-31, 33-39, and 41-47

Dependent claims 2-9, 11-19, 21-31, 33-39, and 41-47 depend from independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40, respectively. Accordingly, the above-articulated arguments related to independent claim 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40 apply with equal force to claims 2-9, 11-19, 21-31, 33-39, and 41-47, which are thus allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-47 are patentable over the cited references. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims as now presented.

Applicants' attorney believes that this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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